
From the Office of Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, December 5, 2006

CONTACT: Dan Tapper, 509-6259
324-9862 (Cell)

SECRETARY OF THE STATE BYSIEWICZ CONGRATULATES WESTPORT FOR WINNING 2006 "DEMOCRACY CUP"

Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz today presented officials from the town of Westport with the "2006 Democracy Challenge Cup" for having the best voter turnout among medium-sized towns in Connecticut. Westport won the 2006 Democracy Cup – the second time it has won the award since 2000 - with a voter participation rate of 72.7 percent this year.

"For the second time since we began awarding the Democracy Cup in 2000, Westport voters have made their town a winner. I congratulate them for their wonderful showing on Election Day," Secretary Bysiewicz said at Westport Town Hall today. "Nearly three out of every four registered voters in Westport came out to vote on Election Day, and that is a very impressive number. Voting is the cornerstone of our democracy and is our most precious civil right. When you choose to vote, you choose to have a say."

Westport also won the inaugural Democracy Challenge Cup for medium-sized towns in 2000.

In addition to Westport, the Democracy Cup this year will also be awarded to Union for having the highest voter participation rate of any small-sized towns (78.8 percent), and West Hartford for having the highest voter participation rate of any large-sized cities or towns (69.4 percent). This is Union's first Democracy Cup victory and West Hartford's fifth.

Co-sponsored by the East Haddam Civic Association in 2000, the Democracy Cup was created as a way to encourage voter participation in each year's elections. Under Democracy Cup criteria established by Secretary Bysiewicz, towns with fewer than 15,000 registered voters are considered small, municipalities with between 15,000 and 30,000 voters are considered mid-sized, and cities and towns with more than 30,000 registered voters are considered large.

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"The turnout was amazing this year. Voters were certainly motivated to follow the issues this year," Scot MacKinnon of the East Haddam Civic Association said. "Campaign rallies had more of an old-fashioned feel to them this cycle, especially in the United States Senate race with plenty of stump speeches and voter-to-candidate contact."

Westport First Selectman Gordon Joseloff said, "We are delighted to win this award again – it's a reflection of the interest and the involvement of Westporters in local, state, and national politics. This is a very savvy, issues-aware community, and getting the people out to the polls is a demonstration of that."

Democratic Registrar of Voters Nita Cohen added, "We were thrilled and pleased. We had a feeling we were headed this way. We are grateful to all the volunteers who helped to make our Election Day successful."

Westport will keep the four-foot high Democracy Cup trophy at Town Hall for the next year as a result of winning this year's challenge. A smaller version of the cup will be awarded to be kept by the town for years to come.

"It is great for our democracy to see towns such as Westport generating such high voter participation rates each year," Secretary Bysiewicz said. "A turnout rate of more than seventy percent in a mid-term election is quite an achievement, and very voter in Westport who went to the polls on November 7th should be proud of themselves."

YEAR	SMALL TOWNS	MIDSIZE TOWNS	LARGE TOWNS
2000	Essex	Westport	West Hartford
2001	Washington	Trumbull	Waterbury
2002	Middlebury	Glastonbury	West Hartford
2003	Washington	Naugatuck	West Hartford
2004	Washington	Wethersfield	Fairfield
2005	Middlebury	Shelton	West Hartford
2006	Union	Westport	West Hartford

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